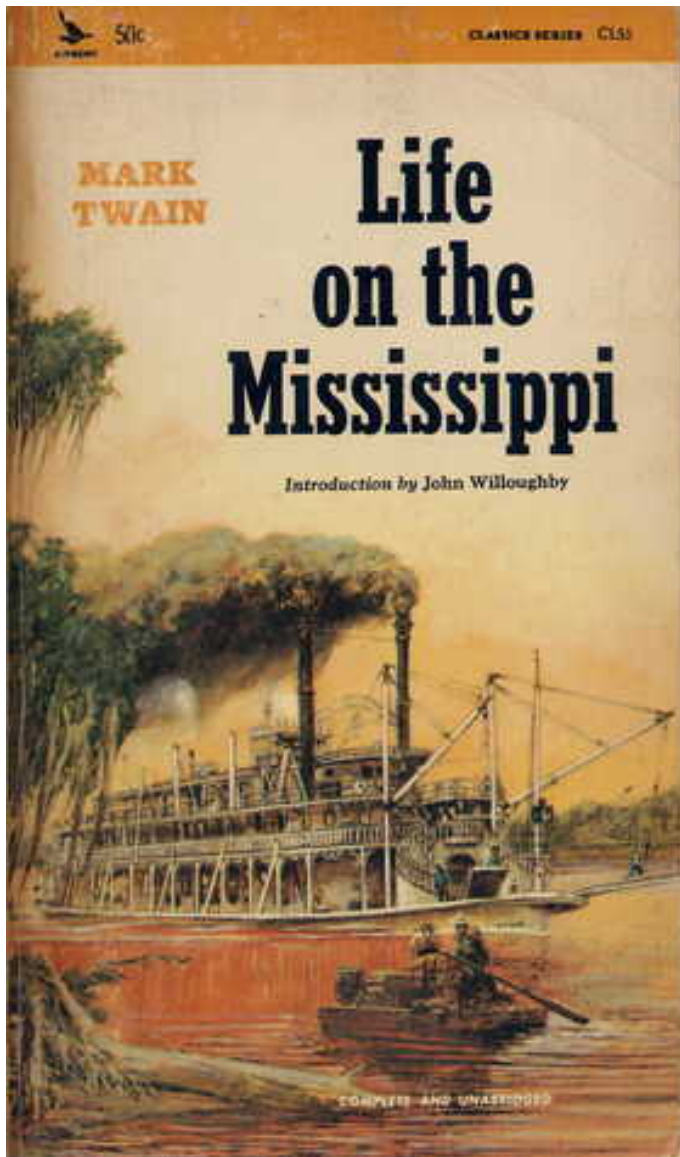


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# Mark Twain

## Life on the Mississippi



Title: Life on the Mississippi

Author: Mark Twain

Format: paperback

Language: English

Pages: 318

Publisher: Airmont Publishing Company, 0

ISBN:

Format: PDF / Kindle / ePub

Size: 8.4 MB

Download: allowed

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## Description

Life on the Mississippi is a memoir by Mark Twain detailing his days as a steamboat pilot on the Mississippi River before & after the American Civil War. The book begins with a brief history of the river from its discovery by Hernando de Soto in 1541. It continues with anecdotes about training as a steamboat pilot, as the 'cub' of an experienced pilot. He describes, with great affection, the science of navigating the ever-changing Mississippi River.

The 2nd half of the book describes Twain's return, many years later, to travel on a steamboat from St Louis to New Orleans. He describes the competition from railroads, the new, large cities & his observations on greed, gullibility, tragedy & bad architecture. He also tells some stories that are likely tall tales.

Simultaneously published in 1883 in the USA & in England, it's said to be the 1st book composed on a typewriter.

## Insightful reviews

Oliver Radtke: I just completed "Life on the Mississippi" by Mark Twain. I did not understand the short story version. It rushed through all the scenes and did not go into detail. I understand it more clearly now, after reading through it so many times. Otherwise, it was hard to read.

The main character, Mark Twain, talks about himself as a kid. He says that when he was a kid he wanted to be a clown, because the circus always came to visit, and he admired them. But as he grew older, he spent most of his time on the river. He saw so many boats that would always go by, so he thought it would be great if he could be a steam boatman. A steam boatman is just a crew member that works on a steamboat.

It takes place on the Mississippi river, near a harbor for the steamboats. It dates somewhere around the early 1800's. That is when most of the steamboats were on the river. The first steamboat was made in 1787. This would be a reason why I believe it took place around the early 1800's.

I would only recommend this short story to people who are interested in Mark Twain's life. This is not a very interesting book, and it is easy to get lost in it. I would recommend this to people of a high reading level. I would not recommend this book to people who are looking for a fun book to read.

Ryan Lawson: I love Mark Twain, I really do. The Adventures of Tom Sawyer as well as the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn are just classic. He was a satirist (a brilliant one at that). He was a story-teller. He was so good at being a satirical orator that he made a living of it! He travelled the world. He was a celebrity if there ever was one.

Maybe it was because I read his fiction first, maybe it was because I idolized him, but good god this was a hard book to get through for me. This wasn't his first book. In fact, this wasn't his first work of non-fiction. However, this was his first work of non-fiction that I have read. The Gilded Age, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The Prince and the Pauper, and many, many more came

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before *Life*; and a ton more came afterwards, though, none more important than the *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. (*Life* actually presents a chapter from *Huck Finn*, which was his next major published work after the aforementioned.)

*Life* absolutely excels in characterization. All of the people that influenced Twain's piloting career of steamboats on the great Mississippi River were not only influential in terms of him becoming a somewhat successful pilot but they also impacted his personality.

I adored all of the stories throughout this piece. I craved them, actually; but therein is the problem with this book. It leaves the reader starving for human interaction. My major issue is with the exposition Twain presents, which is grueling to say the least. I felt suffocated at times with steamboat statistics, town population counts, and distances between islands of the vast river. It's lacking the episodic substance that could make it more interesting!

*Life* actually reminded me of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* because of the way it saturates the texts with facts upon facts upon stats upon stats.

I'm not saying that all of the nautical know-how of the steamboat industry is useless, but I am saying that it's a bit much. It ruins the progression of this book (if there really is any at all).

I had difficulty with the like of linear progress as well. I expected for the book to start at one end of the river and end at another. Twain tries to portray this progression in the final chapter, but I didn't buy into it. *Life* is disjointed. It bounces to and fro between years past and present with entire decades being left out at times. It just isn't congruent enough for my attention span.

Perhaps, this was Twain's intention. There is a lot of detail given at the beginning of *Life* that explains how hard piloting on the Mississippi used to be before significant markers were actually put into place to help guide steamboats down the river and allow them to know where they were. Parts of this book collapse and disappear much like the fragile banks of the river do whenever it becomes mighty.

It is worth reading, however. I would just suggest reading a lot of his fiction first because this is a poor example of Twain's true genius.

Jean Poulos: Of the first fifteen chapters of the book, twelve are reprinted from "The Atlantic." In the three introductory ones which precede these, the physical character of the river is sketched. The book was published in 1883. The book begins with a brief history of the river beginning with the Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto then on the French Marquette and La Salle.

The most engrossing section describes the author's education as a steamboat pilot. Vivid details and anecdotes link the story of life on the River. He tells of the odd habits of the steamboat pilots. There is a section on how to read the river including the conformation of the banks, sandbanks, islands and inlets as well as sudden cut outs of the river after storms.

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The rest of the book is an account of Twain's trip down the Mississippi decades later as an old man. He describes the changes in the river and of America during his lifetime. The book is hilarious, fascinating, meandering tour of the Mississippi River most of all the book is entertaining. I read this as an audio book downloaded from Audible. Grover Gardner does an excellent job narrating the book.

Bill Kerwin: I first learn this e-book fifty years in the past while i used to be in excessive school, and that i recalled Twain's account of his days as a Mississippi steamboat pilot's apprentice as a piece of serious humor and magnificence with quintessentially American themes, equivalent in strength to Huckleberry Finn. a contemporary re-reading has left me either gratified and disappointed: gratified simply because Twain's heritage and outline of the ever-changing Mississippi and his account of his existence as a tender river pilot are only sturdy as I remembered them, yet dissatisfied simply because this account occupies basically the 1st 3rd of the book. the opposite two-thirds has moments of equivalent power--Twain's account of his go back to his boyhood domestic Hannibal, for example--but so much of it's a casually equipped travelogue of a visit up the Mississippi through the fifty-year-old Twain, interrupted via random anecdotes and tall tales. This moment two-thirds is asymmetric yet entertaining, choked with attribute Twain humor; it truly is pretty much as good as "Roughing It," a booklet i love and admire. Nevertheless, it nowhere equals the facility of the 1st hundred pages. And a publication the ends worse than it all started is often a disappointment.

Christopher: What I wish: Oh!, to stay my existence as a steamboat captain at the Mississippi within the 19th century of the yr of our Lord! How i am living: Alas!, to were born in Kentucky within the 1980s!WIW: to drift down the Mississippi, smoking a corn cob pipe, piratical, unruly, and barbarous!HIL: Sitting at a desk, cultivating carpal tunnel as a qualified button pusher and microwaving leftovers for lunch.WIW: To take my flip on the helm, dodging rocks and aiming for smaller crafts, yelling out "quarter twain! part twain! sector much less ta-ree!"HIL: nonetheless sitting at my desk, nonetheless urgent buttons, yelling out "grrrrr! you silly computer, why are you so slow!"

Chana: more often than not i actually loved this publication that is a mixture of autobiography, background and tall tales. i like analyzing in regards to the early steamboat days at the Mississippi. What an grand and tough activity it should have been to pilot the sort of boats sooner than all of the "improvements" to the river similar to making cuts to make it shorter and electrical lighting to work out the place one is going. good i assume they have been advancements within the feel of bringing the river and boating into the trendy age and making it lots safer. yet I enjoyed the outdated days at the river while the pilot needed to have the river memorized in his head. good Mark Twain makes it sounds rather cool. apart from that boilers exploding a part of steamboating. now not such an unusual occasion evidently. Mark Twain's brother Henry died from accidents suffered in a steamboat boiler explosion. That explosion and his brother's demise is written approximately during this book. really quite a bit is roofed during this book, not only steamboating; there's a lot social and political commentary, and as traditional for Mark Twain, a lot of it's funny. I discovered that mark twain skill 2 fathoms that is 12 feet, deep adequate to be secure for the steamboat. learn the most eldritch supposedly Indian tale known as "The timeless Head" in appendix. learn that Mark Twain holds Sir Walter Scott

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accountable for undesirable writing, undesirable structure and at one point, possibly the Civil War. Is he joking? certain and no, I think. I simply imagine this guy had a desirable brain and that i love analyzing him. the single locations this booklet dragged used to be in all of the descriptions of the towns at the Mississippi twenty years after the time Mark Twain was once a riverboat pilot and he travels down the river as a author and tells us approximately it. There are exceptions to this boringness akin to while he is going to his outdated domestic city and asks approximately all of the young children he knew at that time. it truly is attention-grabbing and pleasing while he's giving us background or making jokes, but if he begins giving inhabitants and statistics, i discovered that boring. even supposing the distinction among his optimism at America's destiny and our present nationwide pessimism was once marked.

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